



# Barbarians in the Saddle: An Intellectual Biography of Richard M. Weaver

*Joseph A. Scotchie*

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Richard M. Weaver was one of the founders of modern conservatism and an enduring intellectual figure of twentieth-century America. He was dedicated to examining the dual nature of human beings and the quest for civilized communities in a corrupted age that believed in the religion of science and in the "natural goodness" of man. Weaver's *Ideas Have Consequences* sowed the seeds for the traditionalist wing of modern American conservatism. On the brink of the twenty-first century, the triumph of science and technology looms larger than ever. Weaver's prophetic writings on post-World War II Western decline and his visionary talents, however bleak, can easily extend into many facets of modern life: high divorce rates, a declining standard of living, the dehumanizing aspects of a corporate economy, and the destruction of civil communities.

*Barbarians in the Saddle* is Joseph Scotchie's intellectual biography of Richard M. Weaver. It is an in-depth study of each of Weaver's published works and an examination of the significant influence he had on the formation of conservative America. *Ideas Have Consequences* and *Visions of Order* examine the problem of life in "megalopolis" where the best of everything is promised to the restless masses by their leaders and a cradle-to-grave social security state results in dangerous levels of decadence, resentment, and the loss of civility and culture. In *The Southern Tradition at Bay* and other essays on the American South, Weaver expresses his preference for the nonmaterialistic, virtuous ethos of the Old South. Finally, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* highlights Weaver's devotion to a discipline increasingly out of favor with academia.

Thirty years after his untimely death, Richard Weaver remains a heroic figure to many concerned about the state of American culture and its alienated, rootless conditions. Now a new generation of leaders can understand the importance of this pioneer of thought. *Barbarians in the Saddle* will be of significant value to political theorists, philosophers, and students of American civilization.

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